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COMPARISON BETWEEN SYRIAN AND TURKISH PARENTS' OPINIONS AND EXPECTATIONS ABOUT PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATION

Abstract

This study aims to examine and compare the opinions and expectations of Turkish and Syrian parents about pre-school education. The descriptive method was used in the study. The sample of the study consisted of 410 parents (220 Turkish and 190 Syrian). The data of the study were collected by using Personal Information Form, Questionnaire for Determining Opinion and Expectation for Pre-school Education, and Open-ended Question Form. Frequency and percentage calculation was done in the analysis of the quantitative data and the content analysis for the qualitative data. It is concluded that opinions of Turkish and Syrian parents on pre-school education are mostly similar though they come from different cultural backgrounds and educational experiences; however, there is differentiation in their expectations of pre-school education. Their opinions on preschool education indicate that preschool education should be compulsory and will have positive reflections on the child's future education.

Keywords: Pre-school education, parents' opinions, parents' expectations

TÜRK VE SURIYELİ EBEVEYNLERİN OKUL ÖNCESİ EĞİTİME İLİŞKİN GÖRÜŞLERİNİN VE BEKLENTİLERİNİN KARŞILAŞTIRILMASI

Özet

Bu çalışma, Türk ve Suriyeli ebeveynlerin okul öncesi eğitime ilişkin görüş ve beklentilerini incelemeyi ve karşılaştırmayı amaçlamaktadır. Çalışmada tanımlayıcı yöntem kullanılmıştır. Çalışmanın örneklemini 220'si Türk, 190'ı Suriyeli olmak üzere 410 ebeveyn oluşturmuştur. Çalışmanın verileri kişisel bilgi formu, okul öncesi eğitim için görüş ve beklenti belirleme anketi ve açık uçlu soru formu kullanılarak toplanmıştır. Nicel verilerin analizi frekans ve yüzde hesaplamaları ile yapılırken nitel veriler içerik analizine tabi tutulmuştur. Türk ve Suriyeli ebeveynlerin okul öncesi eğitime ilişkin görüşlerinin, farklı kültürel geçmişlerden ve eğitim deneyimlerinden gelmelerine rağmen çoğunlukla benzer olduğu sonucuna varılmış; ancak, okul öncesi eğitim beklentilerinde farklılıklar ortaya çıkmıştır. Her iki grupta, okul öncesi eğitimin zorunlu olması gerektiğini ve bu sürecin çocuğun gelecekteki eğitimi üzerinde olumlu yansımaları olacağını belirtmişlerdir.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Okul öncesi eğitim, veli görüşleri, veli beklentileri

INTRODUCTION

The preschool period corresponds to the first six-year period in human life. Pre-school education covers the formation of knowledge, skills and behaviours that will be gained through the preparation process for the primary education of the individual and also shaping the future personality by development of interest, skills, attitudes and habits along with physical, social and cognitive intelligence. Pre-school education contributes to the development of children in terms of language, cognitive and social development as well as in many aspects of development. What is more, pre-school education is a quite important process in early childhood when considering it has positive effects on school learning, academic achievement, self development and personality construct in the future.

It has been revealed in various studies that the children who have started primary school with preschool education are more participatory, enterprising and more compatible than those who have not gone through this education and that they begin the primary school more advantageously, which brings about higher academic achievement (Kaiser & Bauer, 2017: 4; Manigo & Allison, 2017: 5-6; Gordon et al., 2015: 3-4; Anders et al., 2013: 195-196; Duncan & Magnuson, 2013: 109-110; Barnett et al., 2012: 19-20; Dickinson & Porche, 2011: 870; Cinkılıç, 2009: 98; Dursun, 2009 :1711; Barnett, 2008: 4-6; Toluç, 2008; Yeşil, 2008; Erbay, 2008: 87; Stipek & Byler, 2001: 176-177). It is evident in this context that early years are of critical importance in individual development and that true support for the development of individual in this period has positive effects on academic success, school performance and social life in the future. During the early years when the pre-school institutions started to serve in our country, they used to be perceived as the place where the child would be looked after outside the home. According to Bayrak and Köksal (2017: 549), since the conscious parents gave the necessary importance to pre-school education, these institutions turned out to be the places where the child acquires and develops skills to support them to learn in the following

years, establishes a relationship with other individuals and builds up social skills to make contact with the social environment. The behaviours to be gained through pre-school education are to be given together with the curriculum. The curriculum is defined as the organization of experiences planned to be acquired by the learner through in-school and out-of-school experiences, and consists of activities designed to provide individuals with the basic objectives of National Education. The curriculum is comprised of four units: goal, content, education, and assessment and evaluation.

Pre-school curriculum should be specifically designed in accordance with the development levels of pre-school children on their physical well-being, motor development, social and emotional development, learning approaches, language development, cognitive and general knowledge areas and should be applied in alignment with these standards (National Institute for Early Education Research [NIEER], 2015: 23). It is probable to say that the parents have effect on the preschool curriculum as much as the educators in terms of successfully carrying out what is expected of the children. Parents are valuable collaborators in pre-school experiences and researches (Siraj-Blatchford et al., 2002: 112-113; Bayrak & Köksal, 2017: 549). Involvement of parents in the pre-school education process, enabling them to take an active role in both the in-school and out-of-school process, will contribute more to the pre-school education period, and at the same time, will help the success of the preschool curriculum. Along with revealing that preschool education contributes positively to children's future academic success and social life, parents' perceptions about preschool education are changing nowadays, and in this context, they have developed more positive attitudes towards pre-school education. According to Tokuç (2007), the awareness of families and the increase in the number of parents who are investigating and questioning is of great importance in that this education process will transform into better-quality experiences.

Upon the literature review, most of the researches conducted so far have revealed that the families have expectations about the support for different development areas of their children, the physical conditions of the institutions, the characteristics of the teachers and being informed (Bayrak & Köksal, 2017: 555; Seyfullahoğulları, 2012: 13; Sevinç, 2006: 224). It is also seen that parents' expectations are related to care and education dimensions of pre-school education (Vidali, 1998: 24). It was found out examining the expectations of parents about preschool education that they have such expectations as giving importance to learning social behaviours (B.K Şahin, Sak, & İ.T Şahin, 2013: 291; Einarsdottir, 2010: 235; Achhpal et al., 2007: 7-8), giving high quality education (Sevinç, 2006: 224; Vidali, 1998;), supporting learning more and providing support for working families (Vidali, 1998: 27), preparation of training programs by experts and being given detailed information about the development of children (Tuğrul & Tokuç, 2007), preparing children for primary school (Kildan, 2012: 146; Achhpal et al., 2007: 9), helping earn self-care skills positive approach in education, safe and clean physical environment, effective discipline, positive emotional atmosphere and school-parent cooperation.

It has been revealed through literature review that parents' expectations vary according to their educational background, income level and demographic information (Bayrak & Köksal, 2017: 555; Şimşek & İverendi, 2011: 250; Crosnoe et al., 2010: 984-985; Jacobson & Engelbrecht, 2000: 145-146). In terms of the studies examining the opinions and expectations of the parents who have different citizenship, Oya Ramazan (2015: 575-576) concluded in her study conducted with Turkish and South Korean mothers that Turkish and South Korean mothers have

expectations for discipline in education, gaining simple addition and subtraction process skills, acquiring ability to use computers and developing foreign language skills. In their study on the opinions and expectations of German and American parents about pre-school education, Cryer et al. (2002: 268-269) found that German parents have expectations of learning by fun, gaining art and motor skills while American parents are in the expectation of creativity training, learning by fun and gaining language skills. Examining the opinions and expectations of European American and Puerto Rican parents, Achhpal (2000) concluded that European American parents have expectations for gaining affective and autonomy skills, and preparation for behavioural skills; however, Puerto Rican parents are the expectation of gaining social skills, achieving basic learning, preparation for primary school, respecting adults and obeying them.

Though the results of Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD] (2017) reports suggest that one of the factors in the success of the education systems is based on the success of the preschool education program, almost none of the 2-year-old children in Turkey attend pre-school education; whereas, the average in OECD countries is 39%. 3-year-old children's school attendance rate in Turkey is 9%, while the OECD average is 78%. It is 32% for 4-5 year old children in Turkey, while OECD average is 87%. In light of the statistical data, the studies in Turkey about pre-school education have been increasingly diversified, and the number of studies on the opinions and expectations of the parents about pre-school education is showing a rapid increase. As a result of varying developments in the world, the necessity of the coexistence of people from different cultures has given rise to the need to know and compare the opinions and expectations of the parents of different cultures about educational program in that country.

In recent years, as the impact of a number of developments around the world, a migration into Turkey has started especially from Syria and other neighbouring countries. The migration from Syria to Turkey has taken place since April, 2011 due to the war in Syria and according to October 2018 data from Turkish Ministry of Interior Directorate General of Migration Management, 3 587.930 immigrants live in Turkey, 560.934 of which are 0-4 years of age while 478.390 are between the ages of 5-9. In this context, the need for education of the children of the people who came through migration has arisen and the children coming through migration have also been involved in the education process together with the Turkish children. Along with this process, a number of arrangements have been performed in order to integrate the children coming through migration and the works are still in progress.

This study aims to obtain, with quantitative and qualitative data collection tools, and compare the opinions and expectations of Syrian and Turkish parents about the pre-school education. This study is thought to contribute to the integration of the opinions and expectations of parents from two different cultures within the preschool education and to design them in a way to be reflected in the curriculum. It should be remembered that parents are valuable collaborators in pre-school experiences and researches (Siraj-blatchford et al., 2002: 112-113). The literature review did not present any researches examining opinions and expectations of Turkish and Syrian parents about pre-school education. It is considered to be of originality and significance as it is the first study in the literature examining and comparing the pre-school education related opinions and expectations of Turkish and Syrian parents in Turkey. The main problem of the study was formed as "What are the opinions and expectations of Syrian and Turkish parents about pre-school education?" The sub-problems are presented as follows:

- What are the opinions of Syrian and Turkish parents about pre-school education?
- What are the opinions of Syrian and Turkish parents about an effective pre-school education?
- What are the expectations of Syrian and Turkish parents about pre-school education?

METHOD

Descriptive method and survey model were used in the study. Survey is a model through which opinions of the participants on a subject or their interests, skills, abilities, attitudes etc. are determined, usually on larger samples than other studies (Metin, 2014). Cross-sectional survey was employed in the study. According to Fraenkel and Wallen (2003: 397), the cross-sectional survey does not spread over a long period of time in a predetermined target population, and the data collection process can extend from one day to a couple of weeks and the data from different groups are collected in the same time period. This type of survey was used in the study since parents were a predetermined target group (Syrian and Turkish parents) and data were collected in a two-week period.

Population and Sample of the Study

The target population of this study is composed of Syrian parents and Turkish parents of the preschool students in Mersin during the 2016-2017 academic year. The target population is an abstract population that the researcher wants to reach, but it is difficult to reach and reflects the researcher's ideal choice (Büyüköztürk, 2012: 2). The reachable population consisted of Syrian and Turkish parents of preschool children who were studying in the central districts of Mersin (Akdeniz, Mezitli, Toroslar, Yenişehir). The reachable population is the concrete population which the researcher can reach showing his realistic choice (Büyüköztürk, 2012: 2). Convenience sampling method, which is of non-probability sampling, was used as a sampling method in the study. The convenience sampling method is to choose the sample from easily accessible and practicable units due to the limitations in terms of time, money and labour force (Büyüköztürk, 2012: 13). In this study, the nationalities of the parents were determined as the convenient sampling criterion. The sample of the study consisted of a total of 410 parents, 220 of which were Turkish (115 female and 105 males) and 190 of which were Syrians (95 female and 95 males).

Table 1. Information on Turkish and Syrian Parents Participating in the Questionnaire to Determine the Opinions and Expectations about Pre-School Education (N=410)

Item	Response	Turkish Parents		Syrian Parents	
		f	%	f	%
Age	20years and below	1	0.5	8	4.2
	21-30	61	27.7	68	35.8
	31-40	110	50	93	48.9

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	41-50	43	19.5	12	6.3
	51 years and over	5	2.3	9	4.7
Educational Background	Primary School	125	56.8	74	38.9
	High School	54	24.5	67	35.3
	University	30	13.6	42	22.1
	Illiterate	11	5	7	3.7
Number of Children	1	17	7.7	16	8.4
	2-3	176	80	108	56.8
	4-5	21	9.5	58	30.5
	6 and more	6	2.7	8	4.2
Full time job	Yes	105	47.7	88	46.3
	No	115	52.3	102	53.7
Attending Preschool Educaiton	Yes	25	11.4	73	38.4
	No	195	88.6	117	61.6
Parental Manner	Democraitc	66	30	118	62.1
	Overprotective	68	30.9	39	20.5
	Authoritative	48	21.8	5	2.6
	Indifferent	1	0.5	13	6.8
	Permissive	37	16.8	15	7.9

Table 1 shows that Turkish parents are generally between the ages of 31-40 (50%) and Syrian parents between 31-40 (48.9%). It was concluded in terms of educational background that both Turkish and Syrian parents are generally primary school graduates, respectively 34.1% and 38.9%. It is similar in the number of children that both Turkish and Syrian parents appear to generally have 2-3 children, respectively 80% and 56.8%. In respect to having a full-time job, 115 of the Turkish parents (52.3%) did not have a permanent job while 102 of the Syrian parents (53.7%) did not have a permanent job. As for having attended preschool education, only 25 of the Turkish parents (11.4%) received preschool education while 195 (88.6%) did not. The number of the Syrian parents who received preschool education is 73 (38.4%) while 117 (61.6%) of Syrian parents did not. Lastly, in parental manner, 68 of the Turkish parents (30.9%) found themselves to be "overprotective" parents while 118 (62.1%) of the Syrian parents expressed themselves as "democratic" parents.

Data Collection Tools

Personal Information Form, Questionnaire for Determining Opinions and Expectations for Pre-school Education, and Open-ended Question Form were applied in the study to collect data.

Quantitative Data Collection Tools

Personal Information Form: Inspired by the Questionnaire for Determining Opinions and Expectations for Pre-school Education developed by Oya Ramazan (2015), the items such as gender, age, educational background, number of children, full-time job status, preschool education and parental manner were taken as variables on the Personal Information Form created by the researchers.

Questionnaire for Determining Opinions and Expectations for Pre-school Education: The questionnaire to collect quantitative data of the study is composed of 19 items by adding and subtracting some items, in line with expert suggestions (10 pre-school teachers, 3 pre-school education experts, 1 curriculum and instruction expert), from 30-item Questionnaire for Determining Opinions and Expectations for Pre-school Education developed by Oya Ramazan (2015). The 16 items of the questionnaire are 3-point likert and 3 are multiple-choice items.

Qualitative Data Collection Tools

The qualitative data used in the research were collected with an open-ended questionnaire. According to the opinions of the experts who also offered suggestions in other measurement tools, 10 questions determined by the researchers were reduced to 2 and the final form was formed.

For the validity and intelligibility of the questions in the open-ended form to be applied to the Syrian parents, Turkish questions were translated into Arabic by an Arabic language expert, and then another Arabic language expert translated the questions into Turkish. It was seen that the first version of the questions were similar to the final version followed by the Turkish-Arabic-Turkish translation process.

Analysis Of Data

Quantitative and qualitative data analyses were performed to analyze the data obtained in the study.

Quantitative Data Analysis

The data obtained in the study were analyzed in SPSS 20 program. Frequency and percentage values were used for analysis.

Qualitative Data Analysis

The Turkish and Arabic qualitative data of the study were analyzed by content analysis. The Miles-Huberman encoder reliability percentage was calculated for the codes obtained from the data in both languages. In the Turkish coding, support of two pre-school teachers was taken in the calculation of Miles-Huberman coder reliability percentage, while the Arabic coding was supported by 2 Arabic language experts working in the school. Arabic-speaking experts translated the codes from Arabic into Turkish.

The reliability percentage is calculated according to the formula of Miles Huberman coding reliability, which is $(\text{Reliability Percentage} = \frac{\text{Agreement}}{\text{Total Agreement} + \text{Disagreement}})$, and it is expected to obtain at least 80% reliability (Miles and Huberman, 2016: 65). Miles - Huberman coder reliability percentages are given in Table 2.

Table 2. Miles - Huberman Coder Reliability Percentages

Open-ended Questions	Coder Reliability
Turkish 1 st Question	%85
Turkish 2 nd Question	%88
Arabic 1 st Question	%89
Arabic 2 nd Question	%90

Data Collection Process

The data of the study were collected from 26 public preschools where Turkish and Syrian children were co-educated and 8 public temporary education centers which had preschool classes of only Syrian students during the 2016-201 academic year by using "Personal Information Form", "Questionnaire for Determining Opinions and Expectations for Pre-school Education" and "Open-ended Questionnaire". Information was given to the teachers about the data collection tools to be applied and parents were asked to give sincere responses to the questions.

RESULTS

Results for the First Sub-problem

The results of the first sub-problem, which was formed as "What are the opinions of the Syrian and Turkish parents about pre-school education?", are shown below in Table 3.

Table 3. Results about Syrian and Turkish Parents' Opinions on Preschool Education

Item	Response	Turkish Parents		Syrian Parents	
		f	%	f	%
1.Children in preschool	Agree	182	82.7	139	73.2
period should be	Neutral	27	12.3	36	18.9
daily read book	Disagree	11	5	15	7.9
(fairy tale, story).					

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2.The child does not have to go to a preschool when there is someone to take care of the child at home.	Agree	28	12.7	43	22.6
	Neutral	8	3.6	23	12.1
	Disagree	184	83.6	124	65.3
3.The education taken in pre-school period positively affects the future education of the child.	Agree	196	89.1	165	86.8
	Neutral	15	6.8	16	8.4
	Disagree	9	4.1	9	4.7
4. Preschool education must be compulsory for all children.	Agree	170	77.3	124	65.3
	Neutral	28	12.7	42	22.1
	Disagree	22	10	24	12.6
5.There must be a strict discipline in preschool institutions .	Agree	97	44.1	146	77.8
	Neutral	19	8.6	23	12.1
	Disagree	104	47.3	21	11.1
6. Children should play outside the preschool institutions every day no matter it is summer or winter.	Agree	25	11.4	80	42.1
	Neutral	20	9.1	40	21.1
	Disagree	175	79.5	70	36.8
7.Teaching reading and writing should be started in preschool education.	Agree	92	41.8	131	68.9
	Neutral	38	17.3	30	15.8
	Disagree	90	40.9	29	15.3
8.Simple addition-subtraction operations should be started in preschool education.	Agree	170	77.3	121	63.7
	Neutral	17	7.7	42	22.1
	Disagree	33	15	27	14.2
9.Foreign language teaching should be started in preschool education .	Agree	116	52.7	138	72.6
	Neutral	25	11.4	27	14.2
	Disagree	79	35.9	25	13.2
10. Teaching how to use computers should be started in preschool	Agree	89	40.5	129	67.9
	Neutral	34	15.5	37	19.5
	Disagree	97	44.1	24	12.6

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education.

11.Values education should be given in preschool education.	Agree	155	70.5	131	68.9
	Neutral	45	20.5	45	23.7
	Disagree	20	9.1	14	7.4
12.Children in preschool education period should be given an opportunity to play with their friends outside the school.	Agree	180	81.8	136	71.6
	Neutral	15	6.8	21	11.1
	Disagree	25	11.4	33	17.4
13. Children in preschool education period should tidy up their toys themselves at home.	Agree	208	94.5	154	81.1
	Neutral	8	3.6	26	13.7
	Disagree	4	1.8	10	5.3
14.Parents should read them books about preschool education and children of this period.	Agree	188	85.5	150	78.9
	Neutral	23	10.5	24	12.6
	Disagree	9	4.1	16	8.4
15. Parents should participate in the meetings and seminars held on education in the preschool institutions.	Agree	182	82.7	128	67.4
	Neutral	23	10.5	47	24.7
	Disagree	15	6.8	15	7.9
16.Art education (painting, music, theatre) should be provided in preschool institution	Agree	191	86.8	129	67.9
	Neutral	19	8.6	41	21.6
	Disagree	10	4.5	20	10.5
17. Reasons for General development of my child		173	39.1	31	11
sending the child to preschool instutions	Mental development of my child	85	19.2	94	33.3
	Preparing my child for primary school	165	37.3	102	36.2
	There is no one to	1	0.2	10	3.5

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	Take care of my child at home				
	Providing the necessary care of my child	18	4.1	45	16
18. Types of behaviours in case of misbehaviour	I explain what his/her misbehaviour means	176	54.3	17	7.3
	I immediately get angry	28	8.6	133	57.3
	I immediately use brute force	-	-	35	15.1
	I punish him/her	26	8	9	3.9
	I forgive him/her, I don't mind it	27	8.3	13	5.6
	I changes depending on my mood	41	12.7	18	7.8
	Other	26	8	7	3
19. The criteria while buying a toy	Suitability with the child's age	144	14.6	24	5.8
	Attracting the child's interest	36	3.7	85	20.4
	Contributing to his/her mental development	87	8.8	45	10.8
	Being educational and instructive	126	12.8	79	19
	Suitability with the child's desire	67	6.8	31	7.5
	Engendering no danger	89	9	26	6.3
	Buying a toy on a special day	15	1.5	23	5.5
	Being entertaining	62	6.3	5	1.2

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Developing creativity	87	8.8	4	1
Benefiting in long term	51	5.2	20	4.8
Contributing to child's development	84	8.5	43	10.3
Involving none of violence element (gun)	69	7	19	4.6
Being safe	45	4.6	1	0.2
Not making the child bored quickly	22	2.2	7	1.7
Other	-	-	4	1

It can be concluded when Table 3 is examined that Turkish parents “agreed” at the highest rate on “Children in preschool period should tidy up their toys themselves at home” (94.5%), “The education taken in preschool period positively affects the future education of the child” (89.1%), and “Art education (painting, music, theatre) should be provided in preschool institution” (86.8%). The highest rate of Syrian parents for “Agree” response is seen to be “The education taken in preschool period positively affects the future education of the child” (86.8%), “Children in preschool period should tidy up their toys themselves at home” (81.1%), “Parents should read them books about preschool education and children of this period” (78.9%).

On the other hand, Turkish parents “disagreed” at the highest rate on “The child does not have to go to a preschool when there is someone to take care of the child at home” (83.6%) and “Children should play outside in preschool institutions every day, no matter it is summer or winter” (79.5%). Syrian parents expressed “disagreement” at the highest rate on the item “The child does not have to go to a preschool when there is someone to take care of the child at home” (65.3%). It can also be concluded that Turkish parents feel “neutral” most about “Values education should be given in preschool institutions” (20.5%) while it is “Parents should participate in the meetings and seminars held on education in preschool institutions” for Syrian parents (24.7%).

As for the reasons for sending their children to preschool institutions, Turkish parents emphasized “for general development of my child” with a frequency of 173 (39.1%) while Syrian parents indicated “to prepare my child for primary school” with a frequency of 102 (36.2%). When considering the type of behaviour in case of children’s misbehaviour, Turkish parents stated “I explain what his/her misbehaviour means” with a frequency of 176 (54.3%); whereas, Syrian parents expressed “I immediately get angry” with a frequency of 133 (57.3%). Lastly, for the criteria while buying a toy, Turkish parents indicated “suitability with the child’s age” with a frequency of 144 (14.6%) and Syrian parents articulated “attracting the child’s interest” with a frequency of 85 (20.5%).

It was concluded that Turkish and Syrian parents mostly had disagreement in the following statements. While 47.3% of Turkish parents did not agree on the item "There should be a strict discipline in pre-school education" 76.8% of Syrian parents agreed on it. 79.5% of Turkish parents stated their disagreement on "Children should play outside the preschool institutions every day, no matter it is summer or winter", however, 42.1% of the Syrian parents agreed on it. Similarly, 44.1% of Turkish parents expressed their disagreement on "Teaching how to use computer should be started in preschool institutions" while 67.9% of the Syrian parents agreed on it.

Results for the Second Sub-problem

The results of the second sub-problem, which was formed as "What are the opinions of the Syrian and Turkish parents about an effective pre-school education?", are shown below in Table 4.

Table 4. Results about Syrian and Turkish Parents' Opinions on Effective Preschool Education

Sub-theme	Codes	Turkish parents		Syrian parents	
		f	%	f	%
EFFIFACY	Program	40	48.8	109	72.2
	Efficacy				
	Teacher	42	51.2	42	27.8
	Effifacy				
CLASSROOM	Class Size	3	16.7	-	-
CONDITIONS	Physical Conditions	11	61.1	-	-
	of the Class				
	Material Equipment	4	22.2	-	-
	of the Class				
SCHOOL	Physical Conditions	4	40	1	50
	of the Class				
CONDITIONS	Qualitative Conditions	6	60	1	50
	of the School				
	(Location, Number of students, etc.)				
OTHER	Discipline	13	54.2	-	-
	Democratic	2	8.3	-	-
	Atmosphere				

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	Quality in Education	-	-	2	50
	Permanence	2	8.3	-	-
	No Violence	3	12.5	-	-
	Security	4	16.7	1	25
	Selecting the True Books	-	-	1	25
IRRELEVANT ANSWER	Irrelevant Answer	30	-	11	-
NO ANSWER	No Answer	75	-	56	

When Table 4 is examined, it is revealed that “Teacher Efficacy” is of more significance for Turkish parents (51.2%) while Syrian parents found “Program Efficacy” more important (72.2%). For the “Classroom Conditions” sub-theme, Turkish parents highlighted the importance of “Physical conditions of the class” (61.1%); however, Syrian parents did not give any opinions about this sub-theme. Regarding the “School Conditions” sub-theme, Turkish parents are seen to focus more on “Qualitative conditions of the school” (60%) while Syrian parents give equal weight to both codes: “Physical Conditions of the School” (50%) and “Qualitative Conditions of the School (Location, Number of students, etc.)” (50%). In the “Other” sub-theme, Turkish parents found “Discipline” of the most significance (54.2%) while Syrian parents highlighted the importance of “Quality in Education” (50%).

Results for the Third Sub-problem

The results of the third sub-problem, which was formed as "What are the expectations of the Syrian and Turkish parents about pre-school education?", are shown below in Table 5.

Table 5. Results about Syrian and Turkish Parents' Expectations of Effective Preschool Education

Sub-theme	Codes	Turkish parents		Syrian parents	
		f	%	f	%
ACQUIRING THE SKILLS	Acquiring Social Skills	70	74.5	14	15.2
	Acquiring Moral Skills	2	2.1	32	34.8
	Acquiring Self-care Skills	3	3.2	7	7.6
	Acquiring Cognitive Skills	10	10.6	39	42.4

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	Skills				
	Acquiring Physical	6	6.4	-	-
	Skills				
	Acquiring Artistic	3	3.2	-	-
	Skills				
EDUCATION	Vocational Education	-	-	2	8
	Koran Education	-	-	4	16
	Values Education	3	60	7	28
	Foreign Language	2	40	12	48
	Education				
PREPARATION	Preparation for	68	88.3	58	64.4
	Primary School				
	Preparation and	9	11.7	32	35.6
	Adaptation to				
	School Culture				
OTHER	Integration	-	-	26	51
	Academic Success	17	94.4	23	45.1
	Having a Nice Time	1	5.6	1	2
	Brain Games	-	-	1	2
IRRELEVANT	Irrelevant Answer	1	-	2	-
ANSWER					
NO ANSWER	No Answer	64	-	58	-

Table 5 shows that Turkish parents find “Acquiring social skills” of the most significance (74.5%) in the sub-theme of “Acquiring Skills” while Syrian parents consider “Acquiring cognitive skills” as the most important (42.4%). For the “Education” sub-theme, Turkish parents highlight “Values education” (60%), however, Syrian parents focus most on “Foreign language education” (48%). When it is of “Preparation” sub-theme, both Turkish and Syrian parents put more weight on “Preparation for primary school”, respectively 88.3% and 64.4%. Finally, in the “Other” sub-theme, Turkish parents choose “Academic success” with the highest percentage (94.4%) while Syrian parents highlight “Integration” (51%).

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

In this study, which aims to determine and compare the opinions and expectations of Turkish and Syrian parents about preschool education and also to develop suggestions in the light of the results, it is concluded that opinions of Turkish and Syrian parents on pre-school education are mostly similar though they come from different cultural and educational backgrounds, and that their expectations from preschool education differentiate from each other.

Conclusion and Discussion for the First Sub-problem

The opinions of parents about preschool education were interpreted and discussed in the first sub-problem of the study.

Turkish and Syrian parents were found to have positive opinions and to be in agreement on the items that children in preschool period should be read books (tale, story) everyday, they need to go to a preschool institution even if there is someone at home to take care of them, preschool education would positively reflect on their future education, they need to play with their friends outside the school, they themselves should tidy up their toys at home, their parents should read them books about preschool education and children of their age, and their parents should attend the meetings and seminars held in the preschool institution about education.

It was revealed that Syrian parents find computer education necessary in the preschool education institution while Turkish parents do not. The findings as to Turkish parents' opinions are seen in line with the results of Oya Ramazan (2015), which suggests that Syrian parents have a higher tendency to use technology than Turkish parents. It was also found out that Syrian parents are of the opinion that strict discipline is necessary in preschool education institutions; whereas, Turkish parents do not find it necessary. The opinions of the Syrian parents on strict discipline show parallelism with the results of the study by Crosnoe et al. (2010) while the opinions of the Turkish parents match up with the results of Oya Ramazan (2015). This result shows that Syrian parents tend to regard the rules at the centre of education in comparison with Turkish parents.

Another disagreement between Syrian and Turkish parents was found to be about playing outside everyday both in summer and winter, that is, Syrian parents think children should play outside no matter it is summer or winter while Turkish parents think they should not. Turkish parents' opinions are again in line with the results of Oya Ramazan (2015) denoting that Turkish parents act overprotective for their children when compared with Syrian parents. The opinions of Turkish and Syrian parents about the need to teach reading-writing and addition-subtraction skills in preschool education institutions show similarity with the results of Oya Ramazan (2015) and Hsieh (2008). In addition, the opinions of Turkish and Syrian parents about values education and art education in preschool education institutions match up with by Cryer et al. (2002) while their opinions about foreign language education are in line with the findings of Oya Ramazan (2015) and Hsieh (2008).

As for the attitudes for the misbehaviours of children, it is concluded that Turkish parents prefer explaining what his/her misbehaviour means, and that Syrian parents immediately get angry. The result suggests that Turkish parents are more patient with their children. For the reason why they send their children to preschool institutions, Turkish parents were seen to send their children to a preschool institution for general development of the child while Syrian parent

emphasized the preparation for primary school. It can be inferred from this result that Turkish parents opt for process-driven education while Syrian parents favour result-oriented education. Regarding the criteria when buying toys for children, Turkish parents pay attention to the suitability with the age of the child while Syrian parents attach importance to attracting children's interest, which indicates that Syrian parents pay regard to their children's requests more than Turkish parents.

Conclusion and Discussion for the Second Sub-problem

The opinions of parents about effective preschool education were interpreted and discussed in the second sub-problem of the study.

It was concluded about the leading criteria for an effective preschool education that Turkish parents put emphasis on teacher efficacy, physical conditions of the class and qualitative state of the school; on the contrary, Syrian parents underlined program efficacy, physical and qualitative conditions of school, and quality in education. The results related to teacher efficacy are parallel with the results of Tuğrul and Tokuç (2007) while discipline-related results are in line with Barbarin et al. (2006) and results about quality in education match up with Sevinç (2006) and Vidali (1998). These findings depict that Syrian parents tend to be program-centered and focus on quality in education while Turkish parents give more weight to a teacher-centered education.

Conclusion and Discussion for the Third Sub-problem

The expectations of parents from preschool education were interpreted and discussed in the third sub-problem of the study.

It was found out that Turkish and Syrian parents are mostly in disagreement on their expectations from preschool education. As well as coming from different cultural and educational backgrounds, this result is due to the fact that Syrian parents have expectations of integration in particular and their expectations might be differing since they have immigrated into a different country.

Turkish parents were seen to have expectations from preschool education such as acquiring social skills, values education, academic success and preparation for primary school. On the other hand, Syrian parents expect their children to acquire cognitive skills, receive foreign language education, undergo an integration process and get prepared for primary school. Expectations of Turkish parents for academic success are in line with Baroody and Diamond (2013), and for acquiring social skills, with Şahin et al. (2013), Einarsdottir (2010), Achhpal (2000) while expectations of Syrian parents for foreign language education match up with Oya Ramazan (2015) and Hsieh (2008). Expectations of both Turkish and Syrian parents about preparation for primary school show parallelism with the results of Kıldan (2012) and Achhpal (2000). The expectations of the Syrian parents to integrate with Turkish students in the education process are considered to be due to coming from a different country.

SUGGESTIONS

Suggestions for the Implementation

Based on the results of the study, besides pre-school education should be compulsory, it can be suggested that parents of the children in pre-school education period can be provided with

trainings on the characteristics of the pre-school period and the subjects they need for the pre-school period. The number of studies on the opinions and expectations of parents who have different nationalities and have moved to other countries by migration or other reasons may be increased. The results of these studies as the reflection of multi-cultural structure on education can be benefited in reorganizing preschool curriculum.

Suggestions for Further Studies

This study was carried out in Mersin and reflects the thoughts of Turkish and Syrian parents in this province. Therefore, it can be enabled to contribute to the literature by doing a study on this subject in the cities such as İstanbul, Kilis, Şanlıurfa, Hatay and Gaziantep where Syrian parents are heavily populated. In addition, a diversified sample of other parents from different nationalities can be studied on this subject. Another deficiency experienced during this research was the lack of scale for the attitudes or perceptions of the parents towards preschool education; for that reason, a scale could be developed.

Limitations of the Study

During this study, support was taken from Arabic language experts to increase the comprehensibility of data collection tools in terms of language difference; however, no preschool education expert who can speak Arabic were available. In addition, the fact that location of the schools is the disadvantaged area of the city made the parent profile different. Therefore, it is not likely to generalize the data to the parents of all preschool students. The main reason for the selection of schools in disadvantaged areas is that most of the immigrant Syrian families are living in these regions.

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